

KARO-ECHO Newsletter Aug-Sept. 2018

The KARO ECHO Net meets on 146.415 MHz Simplex each Thursday evening immediately after the West Contra Costa RACES Net, but never before 1900 local time.

The West Contra Costa County ACS/RACES Net meets each Thursday on 145.110 MHz repeater (TX down 600 with PL 82.5) at 1845 local time.

The Contra Costa County HF EmComm/RACES Net meets each Thursday on 3893 KHz at 1835 local time

KARO-ECHO meets in person at 7:30 PM on the second Monday of each month at the Kensington Community Center, 59 Arlington Ave, Kensington, CA 94707 in the Upper East Room. Ample parking is available. The next meeting is this coming **Monday, September 10, 2018**.

The **Benecia Amateur Radio Club (BARC)** will be holding a 1 day ham class and licensing session on October 6. See: HYPERLINK "http://beneciaarc.com/wp/?page_id=8" http://beneciaarc.com/wp/?page_id=8

The **East Bay ARC (EBARC)** will offer a class to prepare applicants for the Technician Class Amateur Radio License, starting September 7, 2018 and ending November 30. See HYPERLINK "<http://www.ebarc.org/want.html>" <http://www.ebarc.org/want.html>

The class will meet each Friday from at El Sobrante United Methodist Church, on Argyle Rd. off Appian Way in El Sobrante. Textbook is The ARRL Ham Radio License Manual Revised 4th Edition. Books will be available for purchase. FCC examinations and license applications will be administered at the final class session by the EBARC Volunteer Examiners for a fee of \$15. Please register by September 7, 2018. Go to www.ko6no.com and click Register, or email: ko6no@comcast.net, or Contact Ken Fowler at 510-222-0830

The **Mount Diablo Amateur Radio Club (MDARC)** also offers courses and exams. See <http://www.mdarc.org/activities/education/Classes> and <http://www.mdarc.org/activities/license-testing> Tests are offered at 6 pm before the MDARC regular meeting begins.

KaroEcho is currently negotiating with the City of El Cerrito (thanks to Kevin) for the possibility of obtaining a similar one day venue in El Cerrito proper that can be arranged far enough in advance to widely publicize it through local community newsletters, CERT groups, newspapers, and digital media outlets that cover our area. Recruitment as well as engaging our current and past members should be seen as an essential ingredient – a high priority if we are to reach our service potential.

Action Item: Become a Volunteer Examiner (VE) in the ARRL VEC program. Go to HYPERLINK "http://www.arrl.org/become-an-arrl-ve" <http://www.arrl.org/become-an-arrl-ve> and take their free open book test to become a VE.

EVENTS:

Kensington CERT 6 has just installed their Diamond x-300a dual band antenna installed at Colusa Circle staging area. Thanks to Hal, his son Matt, and Don. It hit repeaters as far away as Sonoma, San Francisco, and Solano counties, as well as Contra Costa and Alameda Counties. Further simplex mapping to all other Kensington/El Cerrito CERT designated staging areas as well to the Fire Stations is planned.

CERT EC4 has been coordinated by KaroEcho for GMRS/FRS Channels 2 primary, and Channel GMRS/FRS 7 secondary. RF mapping is being planned.

Howdy, KE6BEE, has accepted net manager responsibilities. Please help out volunteering for net control assignments.

Larry, KK6GIO, has accepted Treasurer responsibilities. Thanks Larry.

Rob, K6RJM, our Web-Maestro has accepted the Newsletter Editor job. Look forward to a snazzy new format in October. Thanks Rob.

Rob is also putting together a station 3 ring binder for each of our KaroEcho installed communications sites that contains ICS-213 forms, a radio and site operations crib sheet, a net Control Station Operations Sheet, a net log (ICS-309), the revised Karo-Echo Field Resources Operations Handbook, an annotated 2m and 70cm simplex frequency list, pencils, erasers, etc.

There will be a **CERT Simulated Emergency Test (SET)** on Sept 30 starting at 10 am and lasting until 12 noon centered at Tassajara Park (**EC 9 Staging Area**). We will set up a message center at Tassajara Park utilizing transfer of messages from FRS/GMRS blocks to Ham Radio to be sent to the EOC. Also Inter-Area CERT radio propagation will be tested. We need operators to man the Emergency Operating Center (EOC) or Fire Station 71, mobiles, and KaroEcho members to man the various CERT Kensington and El Cerrito Staging Areas to test propagation, message handling skills, and net operation. Please contact Don, NI6A, if you can spare a couple of hours to improve our disaster preparedness capability.

Thanks to members DJ KJ6DJ, Howdy KE6BEE, David KJ6AAT, and especially **Jay**

KK6WSS, for their yeoman work refurbishing the new antenna tower for the 145.110 CCCC repeater that hosts the Thursday evening West Co Co County RACES and ACS Net (at 6:45 pm). Jay has put his expertise, personal funds, and many hours of effort into this project. Kudos!

Don has scheduled an **Elmering/Mentoring Class** for Sept 16 from 2 pm to 4:30 pm in El Cerrito. This will be a hands-on general beginners' introduction for existing hams who already have radios; but are interested in improving their radio communications abilities by gaining an overview of amateur radio, its possibilities, and as well as some hands-on practical operating skills.

Since we are all at various degrees of learning, a general class will risk being boring to some and perhaps over-the-head for others. So feel free to email me regarding topics that you would like to cover and preferred times and dates, so that we can schedule a group class. Please contact Don, NI6A@ARRL.NET for personal mentoring on any topic. Possible topics are how repeaters work (duplex) including the use of offsets and PL Tones, Simplex operation, antennas, emergency power, message handling including the use of phonetics, programming your radio, basic rules and courtesies, GMRS/FRS and ham inter-operability and message center operations. You name it, we have it :) **RSVP**

In the meanwhile, please check out the plethora of disaster radio communications topics at <https://www.karoecho.net> website.

Good news: The Diamond X-300a antenna that was formerly installed on the old El Cerrito Senior Center is scheduled for installation at Tassajara Park (**CERT EC 9** staging area) on Sept. 11. After a search inside Tassajara Park Rec, Bldg., we located the old Kenwood TM-741a dual band radio and Astron 12v power supply (a \$400-\$500 value) that was previously installed at that location; but has been off our radar completely. We have future plan to reinstall that radio in a locked cabinet inside the building along with a battery backup system and GMRS radio and antenna, as soon as the Parks and Recreation Department gives final approval. GMRS will provide a valuable adjunct to our block FRS damage assessment and block captains, as well as provide parallel channels for inter-area CERT comms.

KaroEcho currently has five licensed GMRS/Ham operators; but more are desired. Contact HYPERLINK "mailto:admin@karoecho.net" admin@karoecho.net for information on getting your GMRS license and check out our webpage at HYPERLINK "https://www.karoecho.net/workstreams/frsgmrs" <https://www.karoecho.net/workstreams/frsgmrs>

KAROECHO.NET WEB PAGE

Especially, check out the EVENTS Page (HYPERLINK "https://www.karoecho.net/events" <https://www.karoecho.net/events>) and the WORKSTREAMS drop-down menu which will lead one to an extensive training page that will provide online learning at your own pace.

Everything from the very beginning to advanced EmComm operations are detailed. The RESOURCE page has many excellent outside links.

If you are on Facebook, contribute to the Karo-Echo Facebook Page at HYPERLINK "<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1451216838315743/>" <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1451216838315743/>

Training Work Group Activity

Rob, has written an excellent “Getting Started” guide for new hams on our web page. See: HYPERLINK "<https://www.karoecho.net/get-involved/getting-started>" <https://www.karoecho.net/get-involved/getting-started>

Also please fill out the JOIN form if you have not done so previously. Find it as a drop down menu under “Get Involved” See: HYPERLINK "<https://www.karoecho.net/join>" <https://www.karoecho.net/join>

A follow-through novice primer has been put on the website for new hams once they have bought their radio and want to learn more. See: HYPERLINK "<https://drive.google.com/file/d/10J-569BRrx5adhA-hJGPeNITU6B9Yi6z/view>" <https://drive.google.com/file/d/10J-569BRrx5adhA-hJGPeNITU6B9Yi6z/view>

Also a new Dual-Band antenna primer for new hams who want to graduate from the rubber-ducky world is at HYPERLINK "https://drive.google.com/file/d/1u_ozABBRYDJDACFJRTV_rxWF1WjCgW_I/view" https://drive.google.com/file/d/1u_ozABBRYDJDACFJRTV_rxWF1WjCgW_I/view

For newbies, please visit HYPERLINK "<https://www.karoecho.net/workstreams/training>" <https://www.karoecho.net/workstreams/training> and read the study materials. It is all there except for hands-on experience. Ask questions!

KaroEcho Training Work Group interfaces with the Elmering/Mentoring volunteers and has designed a training guide to help members identify what they need to do in order to improve their skills. This guide is broken down to 4 levels. Level A, Advanced Level B, Level C Extra Class, and Level D MAT Trained. What level are you and what is your next step?

HYPERLINK "https://drive.google.com/file/d/1b52QimF_k6WY90aHIPpnoEvmmL5cp1pd/view" https://drive.google.com/file/d/1b52QimF_k6WY90aHIPpnoEvmmL5cp1pd/view

On every Thursday evening net there will be a training session and/or discussion.

Summaries of recent net events are found under our past events page at HYPERLINK "https://www.karoecho.net/events/past-events" <https://www.karoecho.net/events/past-events>

Our Portable and Mobile Capabilities Have Been Enhanced

A portable 50 watt 2 m/70 cm radio station equipped with Anderson Powerpole connectors, including a deep cycle 12v AGM battery, a folding tripod mast stand, a high gain portable antenna, coax has been equipped for portable operations designed to be capable of communicating anywhere in our Karo-Echo region. Thanks to Kevin, KI6KNP, this project has reached its final stage of completion and is ready to be deployed anywhere in KE. We need a few hams willing to set up portable or mobile stations to test a few remote Kensington/El Cerrito locations in our to verify RF coverage. If you might be available on a weekend for an hour or two please send an email to HYPERLINK "mailto:NI6A@ARRL.NET" NI6A@ARRL.NET

Radio Mapping of CERT Areas

We plan to do extensive radio mapping of KE/EC radio hotspots and dead spots. This can be enhanced if members can check in to the Thursday night net from different mobile and/or portable locations. During check-in sign in with your full phonetic callsign followed by the word portable or mobile. An example: "Whiskey Six Lima Kilo Echo mobile" or "Kilo Six Alpha Bravo Charlie portable". Net control will later ask for your specific location after the check-in procedure is over.

Red Flag Fire Patrol 2018

K6RJM (Rob) and David (KJ6AAT) are spearheading a Red Flag Fire Patrol. There may be many additional details such as routes, lookout posts, frequencies, relay procedures, activation methods, and so forth that may be helpful. A Red Flag Fire day is defined by temperatures greater than 90 degrees, humidity less than 12%, and winds greater than 20 mph. Contact Rob (K6RJM) for more info on how you can participate. To subscribe to this new group, send email to HYPERLINK "mailto:fire.patrol+subscribe@karoecho.net" fire.patrol+subscribe@karoecho.net .

To post to the fire patrol group, send email to fire.patrol@karoecho.net

PR/Outreach and Recruitment Leader -- Duties:

Increase KARO-ECHO membership by recruiting new and old hams to participate in both the KARO-ECHO net and the meetings.

We also need more volunteers for our **Technical Maintenance Committee** (maintain equipment installations, fix, and install new equipment) at all agency installations. Thanks to Mike, KM6CXI, Frank, K6FAC, Jamuel KM6HBO, Jerry K6KOP, Marian KC6OBK, and Hal KK6NDF who have been helping out. We can use more team members.

Digital Comms Workgroup

KaroEcho is setting up a digital packet 2m LAN to interface with a 70cm backbone similar to what is in place in Marin and Santa Clara Counties. If you are on packet or interested, please notify either K6RJM, KE6BEE, or NI6A.

Transitions

This will be my last Newsletter as Newsletter editor. It has been a great opportunity to serve the El Cerrito/Kensington Community. Thank you all for your enthusiasm. Please send in your reports and news to your new newsletter editor Rob, K6RJM, HYPERLINK "mailto:admin@karoecho.net" admin@karoecho.net

Note: See the **KARO-ECHO Agenda** for our upcoming Monday, Sept 10, 2018 Meeting see: HYPERLINK "https://www.karoecho.net/events" <https://www.karoecho.net/events> the agenda will be made available no later than the Sunday immediately preceding the meeting.

Also all recent KAROECHO Newsletters and Minutes will be found at our **Past Events page** <https://www.karoecho.net/events/past-events>

The KARO-ECHO **Net Control Protocol and Net Log** (for Net Control Stations, rev). See: HYPERLINK "https://docs.google.com/document/d/14t56EyuLyaZnp_UwjGkxldX65RSdjlglFSyD5zKbghg/edit" https://docs.google.com/document/d/14t56EyuLyaZnp_UwjGkxldX65RSdjlglFSyD5zKbghg/edit

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73, Don, NI6A